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JUNE 1980

NEVER SEND AN INFANTRYMAN WHERE YOU CAN
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by

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas R. Stone
Field Artillery

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US ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013

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ABSTRACT

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General William H. Simpson commanded the American Ninth Army throughout its entire period of combat in the European Theater of Operations in the Second World War. This biographical paper deals with Simpson's leadership. It is set in the period during which Simpson was preparing his army for an assault crossing of the Rhine River. Simpson was under the operational command of the British Field Marshal Montgomery. Relations between Simpson and Montgomery are discussed and particular attention is paid to their disagreement concerning the role that Ninth Army should have in the Rhine crossing. Though these two commanders spoke the same language and were both dedicated to defeating a common enemy, they differed on tactical matters. Those interested in the problems of interoperability might well explore previous experiments such as the placement of this American Army under British command.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.	ii
PREFACE	iii
LIST OF MAPS.	v
PROLOGUE.	1
NEVER SEND AN INFANTRYMAN WHERE YOU CAN SEND AN ARTILLERY SHELL.	4
FOOTNOTES	39
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	48

PREFACE

This Individual Study Project was produced under the aegis of the Department of Military Strategy, Planning and Operations, US Army War College. Thanks is due to General Simpson who not only lived the story but was most generous in making both his time and papers available to the author. Thanks is also given to General Simpson's associates who permitted the author to probe their memories of World War II, and to Assistant Keeper N. A. M. Rodger of the British Public Records Office, and Mr. Tom Branigan of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, who enabled a researcher with a minimum of time to see a vast amount of important material. Numerous members of the US Army War College community contributed, to include: my Army War College classmates who often said in the seminar room and out, "You're not going to talk about General Simpson again!"; Professor Russell F. Weigley, Colonel Dwight L. Adams and Colonel Ronald A. Roberge who urged me to get the project underway; Colonel Donald P. Shaw, Dr. Harold C. Deutsch, Dr. Benjamin F. Cooling, and Dr. Richard J. Sommers of the US Army Military History Institute who provided encouragement; and Colonel Jethro J. Davis, through whose efforts I was granted academic time to do the research necessary to a project of this dimension. Typing from my drafts requires special skill and dedication, and thanks is due to Linda B. Brenneman of the US Army Military History Institute who handled this chore in an outstanding fashion.

Special thanks is due to my Study Advisor, Professor Charles S. Hall, who provided continuous moral support and just enough guidance to

ensure that I stayed on the straight and narrow. Working with Charlie Hall was a real pleasure.

As always, I thank Cindy, Sarah and Tom, my family. Each in his own very special way provided invaluable support during my work.

PROLOGUE

It was May, 1944. The lean, impeccably uniformed officer who reported to the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force in London moved with the assurance of one confident of his skills. LTG William H. Simpson, an almost 56 year old veteran of 35 years military service, smiled as he strode across the office toward GEN Dwight D. Eisenhower to state that a new army would soon be operational in England.

By the end of August, Simpson, the tall slim Texan whose profile reminded many of that of a weathered Indian chief and whose stark baldness made him stand out in any crowd, had moved his Ninth Army headquarters to France. Patton's Third Army was driving to the east. Simpson's first mission was to take command of the VIII Corps and conduct operations on the Brittany Peninsula, to include the capture of the major naval port of Brest.

In late September, with Brest reduced, Simpson's Ninth Army headquarters was shifted to Arlon, Belgium, where the Army assumed responsibility for the sector of the western front between Luxembourg City and St. Vith. Less than a month later, Ninth Army headquarters was moved to the north where it assumed command of the XIX Corps, formerly a part of First Army. Simpson made ready to accept new units which would be moved from the beaches to the battle area.

During mid-November, Ninth Army, now a two-corps force, attacked eastward toward the Roer River. After overcoming stiff resistance, the

Roer was reached. Before the river could be crossed, however, the Germans launched their surprise Bulge assault. During the Bulge, Simpson held on the Roer while many of his divisions were siphoned off to move south to aid First Army in stemming the German tide. With the Bulge reduced, Ninth Army assumed responsibility for a 30-mile wide sector from Roermond south to the unfinished Aachen-Cologne autobahn. Army strength was built up to ten divisions.

Since early in the Battle of the Bulge, Ninth Army had been under the operational control of Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery's 21st Army Group. Montgomery, who was to command the new Allied main effort scheduled to commence in February, planned to use the Ninth Army (Operation GRENADE) and First Canadian Army (Operation VERITABLE) in a converging attack designed to clear the west bank of the Rhine. Thus, Simpson was to conduct an assault crossing of the Roer in the south, then drive to the northeast to link up with LTG Henry D. G. Crerar's First Canadian Army, which was to attack from the Nijmegen area southeast along the Rhine.

Crerar had launched his attack on 8 February. Simpson was scheduled to move on the 10th. Dams upstream from the planned Ninth Army crossing sites, however, remained in German hands, and Simpson was concerned lest the Germans manipulate the river level such that his leading elements would be allowed to cross, then after troops had landed on the east bank they would be cut off by rising water. Once isolated, Simpson's spearheads would be subject to defeat in detail. Enough water had been impounded behind the dams to maintain a flood for ten days. Reports of increased river levels received on the 8th and 9th, coupled with the knowledge that troops of the American First Army were nearing the dams,

caused LTC Simpson to order a 24 hour postponement of the start of GRENADE.

Simpson's decision was correct, for the Germans were manipulating the water level and Ninth Army forces did not cross until 23 February. Once on the east bank of the Roer, the Americans rapidly advanced to the east. As Operation GRENADE concluded, Simpson's Army was taking positions along the west bank of the Rhine.¹

"NEVER SEND AN INFANTRYMAN WHERE YOU CAN SEND
AN ARTILLERY SHELL"²

During Operation GRENADE, General Simpson had been required to make several critical decisions, such as choosing to postpone the assault scheduled for 10 February, then attacking on 23 February before the water had returned to pre-flood level. As the battle unfolded, his choice of an early armored attack was proven correct, and his troops were soon exploiting their initial success. As the advance continued and Simpson proposed a hasty Rhine crossing, he learned to his dismay that Montgomery made the decisions on the Rhine. Simpson's abilities to work with his British allies, considerable though they were, would be sorely tested as he led the Ninth Army effort to plan for and cross the Rhine.

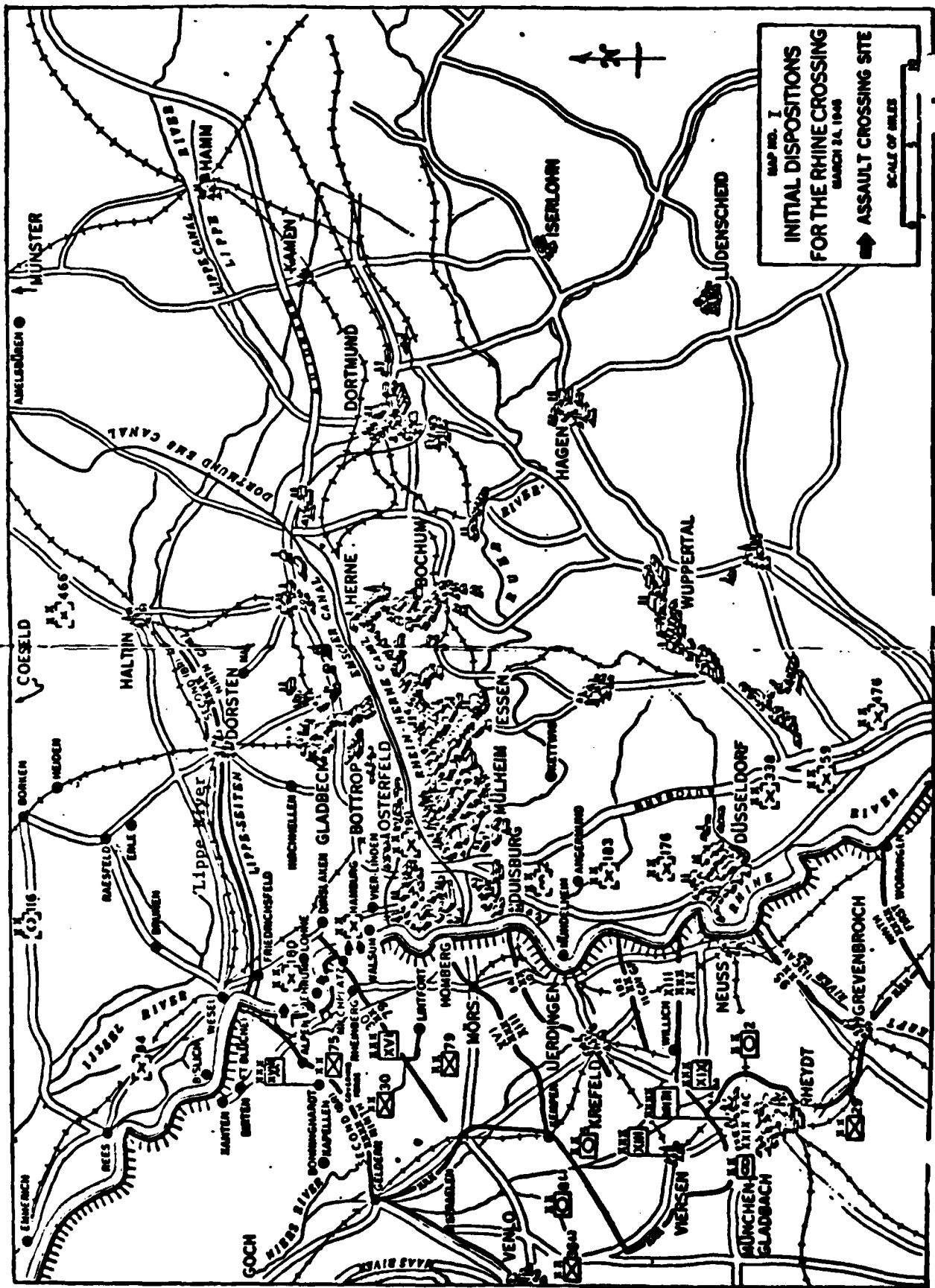
Once over the Rhine, Simpson's troops, in conjunction with elements of the First American Army, could seal off and take the immense Ruhr industrial complex. With the Saar and Silesia already gone, the Ruhr was the only remaining major source of German war materiel. Taking the Ruhr had long been a key objective in SHAEF planning; now that goal was almost within reach.³

Early in his command, Simpson had determined that when he reached the Rhine, Ninth Army would be prepared to take advantage of any crossing opportunity. Motorized assault boats would take only four minutes to cross, yet careful, methodical planning for those critical four minutes had been in progress since Ninth Army was stationed in England. For more than five months prior to the actual assault, an active effort had been

made to acquire needed equipment. During much of that time, engineers were training to conduct the crossing. Shifts in the Ninth Army sector caused the anticipated crossing sites to be changed, but the basic requirements remained the same.⁴

Staff studies were written. No possibility was left unexplored as Ninth Army planners consulted all available source material, to include crossing studies which had been prepared for Napoleon over a century before. When Simpson learned that Ninth Army was to move north from Arlon, Belgium, to Maastricht in the Netherlands, the study effort was focused on the area from the Lippe River south to Dusseldorf (see Map I). Simpson realized that when an actual crossing directive was received from higher headquarters he might have to direct his planners to consider a different area, but even should this occur, staff officers who had worked on the tentative plan would be familiar with handling crossing problems. This knowledge would be put to good use during the planning for the actual assault.⁵

In October, Ninth Army was asked to send representatives to Rhine crossing planning conferences which focused primarily on engineer and ordnance problems. With their preliminary work in hand, Simpson's men were initially far ahead of the other attendees, as they were able to present Ninth Army requirements for a crossing operation. Out of these meetings came decisions to allow the gathering of the large quantities of river crossing material. Soon after Ninth Army headquarters moved into Maastricht, requisitions for equipment and supplies were submitted and the great buildup began.⁶



Planning accelerated in November. During their meeting at Simpson's headquarters on the 16th, Bradley and Montgomery discussed moving airfields to the east to better support a crossing effort. The next day, Simpson directed that a detailed engineer study be made of Rhine crossings in the Cologne to Emmerich area, a wider zone than that of the Lippe River to Düsseldorf, which had been looked at previously.⁷

Ninth Army planners had already completed an outline maneuver plan which anticipated the simultaneous crossing of Ninth Army and the British Second Army. While the actual crossing was not made until late March, the final maneuver plan differed but little from this outline.⁸

Late in November, as Simpson was directing the last phase of his attack to the Roer River, senior Ninth Army engineer officers were briefed. Several days later Ninth Army representatives met with officers of the XVIII Airborne Corps to discuss possible airborne operations north of the Ruhr.⁹

Rhine planning was temporarily suspended during the Ardennes counter-offensive, but as the German threat waned, attention turned once again to the east. An adequate supply of bridging material, landing craft, and assault boats was essential if a crossing operation was to succeed. Montgomery's main crossing in the north was to be closely followed by assaults by Bradley and Devers. There would be no time to shift equipment; thus, a massive amount was needed. When a theater-wide survey revealed shortages, Eisenhower requested that early trans-Atlantic shipment be made.¹⁰ Even with help from the continental United States, the supply of boats and bridging equipment would be limited. Each army group commander would husband what he had, as Simpson would learn to his dismay in March when he asked Montgomery for permission to make a hasty crossing.

Moving crossing equipment, spare parts, replacement personnel, fuel and all the other needs of armies in combat would put a tremendous strain on the available lines of communication. The SHAEF G-4 had estimated, for example, that to sustain just one division in a Rhine bridgehead would require some 540 tons of supplies per day. In the 21 Army Group sector, these supplies would first have to cross the Maas River. Anticipating what lay ahead, Montgomery directed that eight more Maas bridges be built.¹¹

Montgomery planned to take a force of some 30 divisions across the Rhine north of the Ruhr. Participating would be several airborne divisions which would be dropped in coordination with the river crossings. Ninth Army engineers would assist the British by building bridges at Wesel. It was planned that these bridges would be used by the Second Army, at least in the initial stage of the operation.¹²

Planning continued, but by late January it became apparent that there was serious disagreement between the Americans and British concerning responsibility for the various crossing sites. This discord surfaced on 19 January at a planning conference held at Montgomery's headquarters. Simpson, who was meeting at Ninth Army headquarters with Bradley and Montgomery that day, was represented by BG Moore, his Chief of Staff. Moore saw that there was a significant overlap in anticipated zones, and when he remarked that Ninth Army needed the Wesel Bridges and the road net which led to them, he met British objections. Though it was acknowledged that Ninth Army engineer troops would be needed for bridge construction, the British felt that Montgomery's original concept should stand and that initially the bridges and road net should be used by British troops.¹³

Montgomery made his decision plain in a 21 January directive by declaring that Ninth Army headquarters would not participate in the initial assault and would have a role only after the bridgehead had been taken. An American corps of two divisions would be detached from Ninth Army and cross at Rheinberg under command of the Second British Army. Simpson was shocked!¹⁴

After he reviewed the situation, the dejected Texan met with his friend, LTG Sir Miles C. "Bimbo" Dempsey, commander of the Second British Army. Ninth Army had been adjacent to Dempsey's command since October, and an excellent working relationship had been established at both command and staff levels. Data on various Rhine crossing problems had been exchanged in the past. After Montgomery's order appeared, these joint discussions continued. The two army commanders met several times. Soon their planning staffs had developed a modified crossing plan which the generals then proposed to Montgomery.¹⁵

Simpson and Dempsey recommended that Ninth Army execute a two corps crossing both north and south of Wesel in the sector between Xanten and Rheinberg. They argued that assigning Ninth Army a role in the crossing would ensure that all troops and equipment would be used to a maximum advantage. In addition, an American army commander would command the assault of American units and the now experienced Ninth Army staff could be used to ease what would be a heavy load on the Second Army staff.¹⁶

Montgomery did not accept this grand a change to his concept. He did, however, respond to Simpson's concern by modifying his basic plan. On 4 February the field marshal ordered that Ninth Army command the American corps which would assault in the Rheinberg area. Once across,

Simpson was to seize a bridgehead south of the Lippe River. Meanwhile, Second British Army would handle the crossings at Xanten and Rees. Montgomery also decided the Wesel bridge question by declaring that Second Army could use the bridges until a bridgehead had been secured. At that time Ninth Army would take over.¹⁷

Montgomery's decision smoothed ruffled American feathers, but there was much speculation, at that time and later, concerning his reason for not initially assigning a crossing role to Ninth Army. Simpson, reflecting after the war, stated that though Montgomery's original plan had created a difficult situation, he did not believe the plan was intended as an insult.¹⁸

Feeling that Montgomery's initial concept was wrong, Simpson did not attempt to go over the British commander's head. Instead, he met with his friend Dempsey, also a senior British officer, and the two worked out an alternative course of action which they proposed to Montgomery. The result was a crossing role for Ninth Army. Simpson's ability to control his temper and move with skill and diplomacy facilitated the resolution of what could have grown into a serious inter-allied problem.¹⁹

Planning for the great crossing of the Rhine continued during the buildup for and execution of Operations VERITABLE and GRENADE. While the First Canadian and Ninth US Armies were converging on the Rhine, the Second British Army held a quiet sector between them along the Maas River. Montgomery, realizing that Dempsey would have less to do than Simpson, assigned the British army commander the task of planning his own attack and aiding in the American planning effort wherever possible.²⁰

Simpson, in turn, saw that both the XIII and XIX Corps would be deeply involved in preparing for and executing the crossing of the Roer River. He therefore ordered Anderson, of the XVI Corps, to prepare plans for a single corps crossing of the Rhine. As his corps was not slated to see much action in the early phase of GRENADE, Anderson was the logical choice. Furthermore, if GRENADE progressed according to plan, its termination would find the XVI Corps on the Rhine in the correct location to execute its own plan.²¹

There was more behind Simpson's inclination toward assaulting with the XVI Corps than workload or placement on the battlefield. As the 21 Army Group crossing plan had developed, Dempsey would attack with a corps at Xanten and a second at Rees while his third corps would be prepared for an early crossing into the newly taken bridgehead. Initially, Dempsey would have command of the American XVIII Airborne Corps, which would drop in support of the British assault. Later, after giving its British units to Second Army and American units to Ninth Army, the XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters would end its Rhine role and leave the battlefield.²²

Simpson would secure the Army Group right flank by assaulting with one corps between the Lippe River and the Ruhr industrial area. A second corps would initially hold the Rhine line from Düsseldorf to Duisberg, while his third was to be ready for employment as soon as a bridgehead had been taken at Wesel and bridges adequate to support such a large force had been constructed. Once across, this third corps was to pass through the British sector and attack to the east, north of the Lippe River. Eventually, this corps was to encircle the Ruhr from the north.²³

Realizing that the corps which made the assault crossing would almost assuredly be tangled for some time in the Ruhr, Simpson planned to give this task to the XVI, his newest corps. He wanted to keep his more experienced corps, led by the battle-tested Gillem and McLain, free for the mobile warfare he envisaged once the German Rhine defenses were broken.²⁴

Anderson and his XVI Corps staff had been thinking about a Rhine crossing since January. Simpson's 19 February Letter of Instructions served to fill in some of the missing details. The attacking corps would be composed of three divisions--two infantry and one armored. Simpson provided a list of special equipment and information concerning engineer capability. Anderson's plan was to be detailed, for he was required to specify " . . . the composition of the assault waves, types of craft to be used, loading, formation for crossing, and H-hour."²⁵

In early March, with GRENADE all but over, Simpson officially designated the XVI Corps as the assault unit. The attack was now scheduled for 24 March, a week earlier than had tentatively been set in Montgomery's 21 February directive. Simpson selected two top-notch experienced units, the 30th and 79th, to execute the crossing. Both were moved to the Maas River where, in conjunction with the engineer units which would support the actual attack, they embarked on an intensive period of day and night training.²⁶

During the training period, soldiers became familiar with each other as well as with the equipment they were to use. Simpson felt the training had great value. The troops practiced each step of the actual Rhine crossing from carrying an assault boat over a dike, to the assault of the

far shore. When the divisions completed their training, they made night moves to assembly areas. A XIX Corps division then replaced them in the training areas on the Maas. To conceal identity and location, troops of the actual assaulting divisions were not allowed to go on pass. In addition, shoulder patches were removed, and all unit identification symbols were taken from road signs.²⁷

These measures were but a part of an Allied deception plan designed to confuse the Germans concerning the location of crossing points, strength of assembling units, and real assault time. Simpson charged Gillem with the Ninth Army deception mission. Gillem designed his effort to focus German attention on the Düsseldorf-Uerdingen area. If all went as planned, the Germans would anticipate a major attack near Uerdingen on or after 1 April. In actual practice, the deception worked well. The Germans did not discover the location of either assault division. For a week after the XVI Corps crossed the Rhine near Rheinberg, major units from three German divisions were kept in the Düsseldorf-Uerdingen area to oppose the anticipated XIII Corps crossing.²⁸

Supporting both a major deception effort and the buildup for the actual attack, as well as making adequate preparations to supply operations on the far bank, could have been a logistician's nightmare. Through the hard work of many, Simpson's army, between 4 and 14 March, amassed over 138,000 tons of supplies. Included were more than 42,000 tons of ammunition, 3,000,000 rations, and 4,650,000 gallons of gasoline. Supply and evacuation units were moved forward to cut the distance to their customers. Roads and rail lines were repaired. Much gasoline was shipped by pipeline, and supplies were transported by rail whenever possible. The roads,

however, still took a beating from the heavy traffic load. Ninth Army engineers were kept busy repairing the damage.²⁹

Needed items which could not be obtained through army resources were drawn from Communications Zone depots, fabricated or purchased. It was realized that even with all the planning and preparing it would be difficult to resupply the initial waves of attackers once they crossed the Rhine. Extra supplies and equipment, to include vehicles, were issued to make up for estimated early consumption.³⁰

Simpson's army headquarters, smoothly managing the buildup, was no longer the green organization which had become operational in France. As General Bradley observed after the war, Ninth Army was " . . . ambitious and impressively eager to learn."³¹ Simpson and his now combat seasoned senior staff officers had brought Ninth Army to maturity.

An army headquarters is traditionally charged with many and varied duties. Controlling such a diversified organization would have been difficult at any time, but under combat conditions the challenge was especially great. Simpson set the tone, and under the close supervision of his Chief of Staff, BG Moore, headquarters functions were conducted according to well-established army principles. Most staff members, not only at army level but in other units as well, had attended the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth and were thus tied together by the common training they had received. Moore ensured that principles learned at Leavenworth were followed in practice.³²

That this system worked has been attested to by soldiers of various grades who served in Ninth Army. For example, a division commander, queried after the war, could remember no problems that he had with the

Army staff, and a former machine gun sergeant stated that when his division joined Ninth Army he received patrol instructions early enough to properly plan, a situation which did not occur when his division was in two other armies. A combat command commander, again a veteran of service in several armies, remembered Ninth Army for its smooth operation. Simpson's subordinate commanders and his staff officers did not always see eye to eye, but when disagreements did arise, as, for example, when the Army G-3 changed a corps boundary during Operation GRENADE, Simpson and Moore saw to it that they were resolved in a professional manner.³³

Ensuring that the efforts of this large army staff were being expended to the same end and that subordinate units were receiving proper support required careful coordination. Staff conferences were held virtually every morning. Simpson and his key officers were updated on the army situation and the army commander gave appropriate guidance. Even tempered and composed, Simpson was easy to brief for he refrained from interrupting and allowed the briefer to complete his presentation before questions were asked.³⁴

Following the regular staff meeting, Simpson often met with his air commander and G-3 to discuss air support plans. When artillery ammunition was short, the artillery officer joined the group.³⁵

Simpson and other properly cleared officers also routinely received Ultra briefings where material from decrypted German messages was presented. Information related to ground forces was briefed; then a representative of the XXIX Tactical Air Command discussed the air situation. Simpson had, after the first Ultra briefing, talked to those present concerning the requirement for absolute secrecy. It was occasionally

necessary to issue reminders, but there were no security breaches of a nature which would have to be reported to higher headquarters.³⁶

While formal briefings were important, informal moments contributed to the feeling of togetherness and understanding of one another's problems which marked the Ninth Army staff. Each evening, about 1800, BG Moore assembled his "G's" and his Deputy Chief of Staff for a half hour of informal discussion of what had happened and what was to come. Routine actions would be reflected in reports which would eventually reach Moore's desk, but during this early evening meeting he was particularly interested in decisions the staff officers had made. Moore wanted to be fully informed so that he could field queries, should any arise. The Chief of Staff took great care to ensure that he, in turn, kept Simpson up to date on key staff matters.³⁷

Later, the senior staff members joined the commanding general at the evening meal. On occasion, a unit commander in from the field, would be a part of the group. Before they sat down to eat the officers discussed affairs of the day and exchanged a story or two. While he did not dominate the conversation, after hearing several stories Simpson would often be reminded of one of his own. The atmosphere was cordial, and the fact that all could freely converse in this informal fashion served not only to keep Simpson and Moore informed, but it also helped to tie the staff together.³⁸

After dinner, an officer would come in and update the group on the situation. Simpson would then telephone each of his corps commanders to see how things were going and to ask them how they felt about activities to take place the next day. His telephoning completed, Simpson would generally talk over the calls with a small group, usually the Chief of

Staff, G-2, G-3, G-4 and sometimes the Deputy Chief of Staff. After Simpson had given appropriate guidance there was no doubt in the staff officers' minds concerning the thoughts and intentions of their commander. Then, following a period of relaxation during which he might watch a movie or talk with a visiting USO artist, Simpson would take a brisk walk, perhaps review the situation map maintained in his quarters, and retire for the night.³⁹

So the days passed with the staff working together to implement Simpson's directives, keep him informed, and handle their routine duties. More was involved than office work, for the army staff officers, often headquartered far from the scene of combat, made frequent trips to units closer to the front as well as to higher and adjacent headquarters. During trips forward, they not only observed the situation, but also saw at first hand the problems which were being faced by their counterparts in subordinate units. Simpson, who encouraged staff visits, believed that staff officers should center their attention on activities one and two echelons below. Thus, the focus of Ninth Army staff officers was on the corps and division level, though smaller units were often visited as well. Such visits not only allowed staff officers to resolve some problems on the spot and pass others along with vital information back to Ninth Army headquarters, but the mere presence of army staff officers in the forward area demonstrated to those assigned to subordinate headquarters that the army staff cared about them and their problems.⁴⁰

Planning was a major staff function. Both Simpson and Moore stressed that regular military staff planning procedures be followed. Simpson usually discussed a new mission with the army group commander prior to the

time that a directive was issued. When the mission arrived, Simpson would give his general guidance. The staff then set to work preparing an estimate of the situation. Heads of each staff section directed study of their appropriate areas, with the engineer making a terrain analysis, the G-3 preparing possible courses of action and combinations of options, the G-2 determining enemy capabilities to meet each course of action, the G-1 and G-4 calculating whether the plans could be supported, and special staff officers making comments when appropriate.⁴¹

As had been taught at the Command and General Staff School, early in the planning sequence the staff took a careful look at the final objective and at what operations would probably have to be conducted after its seizure. With the probable next objective in mind, troop dispositions were envisioned and whenever possible Ninth Army plans were designed so that each operation would end with troops properly disposed for a rapid kickoff of the succeeding attack. Swift, decisive combat was anticipated, and provisions were made to exploit success. As a means for Simpson to immediately influence the action, a division was kept in army reserve. When, during an operation, the reserve was committed, it was Ninth Army practice to take a tired division out of the line to reconstitute the Army reserve.⁴²

Many courses of action were examined as planning for future operations progressed. Under Moore's guidance all but about three were eventually discarded as the Chief of Staff and officers from the G-2 and G-3 sections carefully tested each possible solution. Simpson was a great believer in the necessity of adequate logistical support, and before he approved any plan he wanted to ensure that it could be supported. The G-4 contribution was, therefore, a key factor in all planning. When

the staff work was completed, the finished product was briefed to the army commander. Simpson generally agreed with the implementation of his guidance, and approved the staff recommendation.⁴³

Key to the successful operation of this system, in which the staff made its recommendations and the commanding general his decision, was the relationship between the commanding general and his Chief of Staff. Simpson and Moore had worked together in several units, and each understood the other. An atmosphere of mutual trust and admiration prevailed. Moore usually knew how Simpson would react; Simpson, in turn, gave Moore a great deal of latitude. Often when Simpson was in the field Moore would issue orders in his commander's name, then tell Simpson later. So closely did the two work together that it is impossible to sort out actions taken, ideas presented. Moore, the intelligent, thorough, dedicated, and loyal staff officer, complimented Simpson, the down-to-earth troop leader.⁴⁴

Simpson was careful to enhance Moore's position by using the staff through the chief. When the army commander was in his office, he either passed his guidance and questions through the chief or had Moore sit in on his discussions with staff officers. Both Simpson and Moore realized that just as there could be only one army commander, only one man should be in charge of the staff. Thus, even when Simpson was contacted by another general officer--as, for example, when BG Sibert, Bradley's G-2, called concerning personnel changes in the Ninth Army G-2 Section--the general officer was referred to Moore. The Simpson/Moore team was extremely effective. As the war progressed, the two officers won the respect and praise of those with whom they worked.⁴⁵

Simpson had the ability to elicit the best from his staff, and in many ways working for him was enjoyable. Simpson let staff officers do their jobs, appreciated and praised good performance, and seemed to be interested in what they were doing. Though he was even tempered, it was well known that he could make his displeasure plainly known when the occasion warranted such action. Much of Simpson's time was spent in the field. While he was concerned about the welfare of his troops, he realized that soldiers in the front line would often not be aware of the work being done to solve the many problems which confront an army in combat. The army commander listened attentively when a problem was discussed, but he did not overreact. His standard reply was that he would look into the situation. His aide made notes, and when the army commander returned to his headquarters, he and his aide discussed their trip with the Chief of Staff. While Moore saw that staff action was initiated as necessary, he generally found that he was able to tell Simpson of work that was already being done to resolve the various problems.

By moving in this deliberate manner, Simpson's actions were based upon the broadest of perspectives. Not only could he thus decide in what he felt to be the best interest of the entire Ninth Army, but he also ensured that staff effort was focused where he and Moore, after due consideration, thought it should be.

Mead, Simpson's wartime G-3, later summed up his estimate of Simpson's ability to deal with the staff by stating: "General Simpson's genius lay in his charismatic manner, his command presence, his ability to listen, his unfailing use of his staff to check things out before making

decisions and his way of making all hands feel that they were important to him and to the army I have never known a commander to make better use of his staff than General Simpson."⁴⁵

Staff officers can make plans and see that war material is available when needed, but it is the combat elements which must ultimately close with and defeat the enemy. During heavy fighting Simpson felt that he needed to maintain a perspective of his entire front and be easily available by telephone or radio in case a critical decision would have to be made. He believed that he could do the most good by working through his corps and division commanders, thus he spent little time with front-line units. While he was not often personally present, he did understand the front line situation. His service in the Philippines and Mexico and as a divisional staff officer in the First World War had given him a feel for the challenge met by the infantrymen and tankers who were daily face-to-face with the enemy. He took great care to see that while his objectives were attained, battles were won with a minimum of casualties. In fact, it was rumored among the front-line troopers that "Hawknose Simpson" had reportedly said, "Never send an infantryman where you can send an artillery shell."⁴⁷ When Simpson did visit the front his mere presence had a positive effect. In fact, when it seemed to Moore and Mead that a gain of a couple of miles was needed from a particular division, it was tactfully suggested that the "old man" drop in for a visit--it never failed.⁴⁸

Simpson's corps commanders actually fought the tactical battle, and his relations with Anderson, Gillem, and McLain were extremely good. His method of command was to solicit the views of each of his corps commanders,

then give due attention to their thoughts before final orders were written. When he was planning an operation, Simpson would explain his concept early and frequently orally, so that as much time as possible was available for discussion and corps level planning. True to the American tradition, he told his subordinates what he wanted accomplished, then left it up to them to devise a way to attain the objective. Once corps plans were made and submitted to Ninth Army headquarters, conferences were held during which Simpson and the corps commanders discussed and modified plans as necessary. Much like a head football coach and his assistants work out a series of plays, Simpson and his corps and often division commanders wargamed an operation so that they could anticipate contingencies and agree on what action should be taken in each case. Before troops were committed to battle, Simpson wanted mutual understanding, maximum preparation, and resolution of difficulties. His system worked, and as BG I. D. White, who commanded the Second Armored Division, recalled: "When the orders were finally issued, each subordinate commander felt a compelling personal interest to effectively carry out his assignment."⁴⁹

When combat began, Simpson kept a close watch on the situation. He made it a practice, however, not to interfere with a subordinate's conduct of the battle. Should an occasion arise which had not been foreseen in the planning sessions, Simpson was prepared to modify his plans or influence the action through the use of the resources he had at hand or could summon. Corps commanders appreciated this flexibility and also Simpson's cool, calm manner of operation. When Simpson felt that things were not going as he wished, he did not bypass a corps commander to give

orders to a division or regimental commander; but he did make his feelings known. It was well understood that as Mead remarked: "The iron fist in the velvet glove was there."⁵⁰

Reflecting after the war, Gillem expressed his recollection of how Simpson worked with his corps commanders:

The relationship maintained between the Army commander (General Simpson) and his corps commanders . . . was pleasant, very personal, understanding and cooperative. I had a high regard for his professional ability, his integrity, his knowledge, and his general human qualities . . . he was eminently fair . . . I could not wish for a more desirable relationship, both personal and professional . . . he was the type commander under whom to serve in war. He reflected the highest ideals of service and always respected the advice or information from his corps commanders . . . General Simpson represented the type of leadership which inspired subordinates and stimulated all ranks to work with him and for him.⁵¹

Simpson's treatment of his Ninth Army staff and his corps commanders was influenced by his own long years of experience. Reading he had done concerning the successful command styles of leaders of previous wars also had an effect. He recalled that during his West Point Cadet days he had read that Napoleon had recommended the study of the great commanders of the past. Simpson continued to read military biographies throughout his life. For example, in 1941 or 1942 Simpson had read Archibald Wavell's Allenby: A Study in Greatness. Allenby, Simpson noted, had achieved success in Palestine during the First World War by giving his staff instructions, then letting them do their jobs. Allenby had realized that it was impossible to achieve a maximum effort if the commander immersed himself in minor details and tried to run everything himself. Application of these techniques was evident in Simpson's dealing with his staff.⁵²

After Simpson took command of Ninth Army he was given and then read Douglas Southall Freeman's Lee's Lieutenants. Son of a Confederate

veteran himself, Simpson was, almost by heredity, an admirer of Lee, and his admiration had grown through the years as he learned more about the Virginian. One of Lee's practices which made an impact on Simpson was the technique of giving corps commanders orders, then letting them fight the battle, intervening only when absolutely necessary.⁵³

While Simpson's manner of command was influenced by material he read, lessons he had learned through his almost 35 years of commissioned service had a major effect in shaping his command style. When he was a staff officer in an infantry division in the First World War, for example, Simpson noted how General John J. Pershing, immediately prior to the Meuse Argonne attack, visited each assaulting division to ensure that the attack plan was what he wanted. As an army commander Simpson did not feel that he had to visit each division, but he took pains through conferences and telephone calls to be absolutely sure that his subordinate commanders had no doubt in their minds concerning the army plan and objectives.⁵⁴

Simpson's observation of Pershing also helped him deal with a delicate problem--what to do when a corps commander commits a breach of security. When one of his corps commanders told Simpson that he had violated security standards during a telephone conversation, Simpson immediately recalled a similar situation in World War I. At that time a no patrolling order had been in effect, and troops from Simpson's division had been captured while on patrol. When Simpson's division commander reported the incident to the corps commander, the senior officer considered that the act of reporting was reprimand enough and took the incident no further. Over 15 years later Simpson did likewise in the case of his own corps commander and told the offender that the incident was closed. That corps Commander went on to give distinguished service throughout the rest of the war.⁵⁵

A key to Simpson's ability to maintain rapport and elicit maximum efforts from his subordinates was his sincere caring about people. He treated his staff as if they were members of his family. Should a staff officer stumble during a briefing, Simpson attempted, without cussing or raising his voice to draw him out. When it became obvious that an officer could not handle the pressure and would have to go, Simpson was known to arrange for the one who had not met his standards to be admitted to the hospital, then quietly shifted to a job he could handle. Such an attitude was appreciated, for while it was no secret that the officer was moved, he had been spared the indignity of a highly public relief in combat. In at least one case an individual so treated later recovered to the extent that he retired as a general officer.⁵⁶

Simpson, the lean and fit Texan, proved that a senior officer can be personable and caring, while still being a winner. Always self-confident, Simpson was a general and he looked it. He seemed to radiate efficiency with his warming smile, shaven head, and his always sharp looking regulation uniform.

Wise in the ways of soldiers and soldiering, Simpson tried to build confidence and ensure that his subordinate commanders knew that everything possible was being done to support them. He never raised his voice nor did he try to run a commander's battle for him. His visits were looked forward to rather than feared.

Simpson's mere presence in a headquarters or while visiting a unit in the field served to inspire confidence in those who saw him or knew that he was there. Without untoward theatrical display of flamboyance, he moved about the army area observing and asking questions.⁵⁷ Considering

the positive effect that he had on those with whom he came in contact, it is regrettable that he did not visit troop units more often.

Though Simpson was not always highly visible, the smooth running of Ninth Army was obvious, especially to those who had served in several armies. Simpson's personality--calm, considerate, gentlemanly, yet determined to win--seemed to spread throughout the army.⁵⁸

Simpson's quiet effectiveness as a leader did not immediately stand out in a theater where officers named Patton and Montgomery served, yet his ability to do the job became more and more evident as the war wore on. His reputation prior to his assignment as Ninth Army Commander was, as Bradley later put it, " . . . that of one of our best senior officers."⁵⁹ Yet when Bradley, just before the Bulge, compiled a list of officers who had contributed to the war effort, he placed Simpson 16 of 32 named. Bradley told Eisenhower, for it was he who had requested the list, that such officers as J. Lawton Collins, Harold R. Bull, W. B. Kean, and Troy H. Middleton placed higher on his list than did Simpson.⁶⁰

Eisenhower's opinion of Simpson seemed to improve steadily throughout the war. In late August 1944, the Supreme Commander had told General Marshall that if Ninth Army was not committed soon, a corps commander experienced in handling large numbers of troops might be put in command in place of Simpson. Later, on 1 October, Eisenhower wrote the Chief of Staff recommending that Simpson be nominated to the Senate for promotion to the grade of lieutenant general. Simpson's previous assignment as commander of the Fourth Army had entitled him to the rank of lieutenant general. As he personally did not have the rank, and as no provision had been made for the commander of the Ninth Army to be a lieutenant general,

Simpson retained the grade only by being assigned on paper as the commander of the Fourth Army who was attached to the Ninth Army. The actual Fourth Army Commander thus could not be promoted beyond the grade of major general. If Marshall recommended Simpson, and if his recommendation were approved, the entire paper work exercise could be terminated.⁶¹

In mid-January, 1945, Marshall asked Eisenhower if he still felt that Simpson should be a lieutenant general. Eisenhower replied: "With respect to Simpson, he should by all means be made a temporary lieutenant general. He is excellent in every respect."⁶²

On 27 January, Marshall, en route to the Yalta Conference, stopped at Marseilles to meet with Eisenhower. After that meeting Eisenhower prepared a memorandum in which he stated his personal ranking of 38 general officers according to their contribution to the war effort. Simpson was ranked 12 of 38 after Bradley, Patton, Collins, Hodges, and others. In the column which called for outstanding characteristics or qualifications, Eisenhower wrote of Simpson: "Clear thinker, energetic, balanced."⁶³

By the end of January President Roosevelt had nominated Simpson for promotion to the grade of temporary lieutenant general. Simpson was appointed Lieutenant General in the Army of the United States on 6 February, and in early March Eisenhower wrote to Marshall that Simpson was one of the six officers whom he eventually planned to recommend for the fourth star of a full general.⁶⁴

Thus, when Simpson moved on 10 March to München-Gladbach, the new Ninth Army headquarters site, his superiors were coming to realize his worth to the war effort. But such recognition was not confined to Simpson's American comrades, for his value had become evident to Field

Marshal Montgomery as well. On the same day that Simpson moved forward, Montgomery wrote: " . . . I would like to tell you how very pleased I have been with everything the Ninth Army has done. The operations were planned and carried through with great skill and energy. It has fallen to my lot to be mixed up with a good deal of fighting since I took command of the Eighth Army before Alamein in 1942; and the experience I have gained enables me to judge pretty well the military calibre of Armies. I can truthfully say that the operations of the Ninth Army, since 23 Feb last, have been up to the best standards."⁶⁵ Considering its source, this letter was high praise indeed.

When Simpson received Montgomery's letter, the Rhine still lay ahead and beyond it was the Elbe and Berlin. The move of Ninth Army headquarters to München-Gladbach enabled Simpson to continue to plan his Rhine crossing from a city situated not far from the river itself. His office was located in what had been the German courthouse. A number of families had been moved from the area so that barbed wire could be erected around the headquarters complex. The same sort of clearing operation took place around Simpson's living quarters, which were established in a private house some three blocks from the headquarters.⁶⁶

For the first time Ninth Army headquarters was located in an occupied German town. Much of München-Gladbach lay in ruins, and what stood was covered with Nazi propaganda slogans. The occupiers realized the discomfort being experienced by the populace when the civilians were turned out of their houses, or required to give up furniture. Many American soldiers, however, had vivid memories of the destruction they had seen in England, and virtually all remembered the damage the Germans had done in

the Netherlands. Major Horn, Simpson's aide, witnessed the movement of German civilians from their homes, then noted his feelings in his diary:

The removed persons, classified as "refugees," streamed over the town, towing, pulling, carrying, dragging, in every conceivable type of cart, wagon, wheelbarrow and baby buggy, their household complete. Pathetic in a way, still the overpowering sense that they were getting damned, well what they deserved seemed to pervade other feelings.⁶⁷

As the German civilians moved out, Simpson, operating from his new headquarters, worked on preparations for the Rhine crossing. Having had many years of command experience, Simpson was well aware of the problems and pressures faced by commanders. Often he would call one commander or another in for dinner at army headquarters so that the officer could get a break from the strain of combat, and the two of them could talk at some length about conditions at the front. In other instances, when he or a senior staff officer observed that a commander was becoming overly tired, Simpson would pull the individual out for a three-day rest. A division commander, for example, was once brought in, protesting all the way that he did not want to leave his command. As the corps commander had already been told of Simpson's decision, the only recourse open to the division commander was to appeal to the army commander himself. Simpson gave him two minutes, told him that he was not interested in reasons why he should not have rest, and said that he had arranged for his own plane to take the division commander to either London or Paris. Upon his return the division commander told Simpson that he had not realized how tired he actually was. He had arrived in London at 1500. Once in his room he took off his jacket and loosened his tie for a brief rest before dinner. He awoke at noon the next day.⁶⁸

Rest, recreation, and entertainment for the troops was also a concern, and Ninth Army assumed control of and enlarged rest centers previously operated by divisions and corps. A quota system was established, and when fully operational the group of rest centers, located in the Netherlands, could handle 5,000 soldiers at once. Troops who remained in the fighting zone were not forgotten as Coca-Cola began to arrive from Brussels (192 bottles per 100 men per week), and a ration of a liter of beer per man per week could be picked up at a brewery in Alkin, Belgium.⁶⁹

Simpson's caring attitude seemed to pervade his entire command. In fact, when two sergeants reminisced after the war concerning what they remembered about Ninth Army and its commander, one commented that he could feel that the troops came first, while the other recalled that he got his candy bars and cigarettes on time, that passwords came down before dark, and that patrol plans made sense.⁷⁰

Soon the army that Simpson had trained and cared for would be put to another test. The Rhine had to be crossed, a bridgehead secured, and then an attack launched into the vitals of the Reich. Each passing day brought the crossing nearer. On 9 March Simpson flew to Montgomery's headquarters to receive 21 Army Group "Orders for the Battle of the Rhine." The field marshal announced that target date for Operation PLUNDER was 24 March. With Ninth Army on the right, and the Second British Army on the left, Montgomery planned to cross between Rheinberg and Rees. In the initial phase the bridgehead line would be Duisberg-Bottrop-Dorsten-Borken then in an arc to Punnerden on the Rhine north of Emmerich. The inter-army boundary would be the Lippe River. Simpson was to protect the army group right flank and was to seize enough territory

to ensure both the allied use of Dorsten and the safety of Wesel. Wesel was slated to be taken by the Second Army, with the help of the XVIII Airborne Corps which would drop two divisions on the high ground northwest of the town, block highways to the north and northwest, and disperse German observers who might be able to bring fire on the crossings at Xanten and Wesel. While the British and Americans attacked, the Canadian First Army would be holding the line on the Rhine and Maas Rivers, from Emmerich to the sea. Crerar's troops would secure Antwerp, and its critical port facilities, against a possible German attack. Later the Canadians would bridge the Rhine at Emmerich.

During Montgomery's second phase the bridgehead would be expanded. To secure his portion of the new line, Hamm-Münster, Simpson was to pass a corps of three infantry divisions and one armored division through the right flank of the British Second Army. This corps, as it attacked to the east would be charged with developing an army group right flank along the Lippe River just north of the Ruhr. Meanwhile, the American corps which had conducted the assault crossing (XVI) would continue to secure its bridgehead south of the Lippe River.⁷¹

Simpson published his own order on 13 March, and provided more details in an amendment six days later. Anderson would assault, with McLain passing into the bridgehead as soon as possible. Gillem would hold the Rhine line until ordered to enter the bridgehead. When Gillem's XIII Corps did go into action, it would take over the northern part of the Ninth Army zone and advance to the east abreast of McLain's XIX Corps.⁷²

Planning continued with Anderson and his staff preparing for the assault. Lessons learned in the Roer crossing provided important points

to consider; for example, a plan was prepared to ensure that units downstream would be notified of drifting boats or other large pieces of equipment which might endanger tactical bridging. Anderson saw that divisional plans were prepared, composition of the assault waves settled, artillery support coordinated (53 field artillery battalions would support the XVI Corps crossing), air plans confirmed and attention paid to all of the myriad of tasks which had to be accomplished if the assault was to have the maximum effect.⁷³

Anderson's troops would not be the first Americans to cross the Rhine for on 7 March, two days prior to Montgomery's issuing of his final order, an event occurred which forever etched the name Remagen into the annals of military history. Soldiers of MG John W. Leonard's Ninth Armored Division, a part of Hodges' First Army, found the Ludendorf Bridge at Remagen wired for demolition, but still standing. Though one charge was exploded, Americans raced across, established a bridgehead, and held.⁷⁴

Early on 8 March, Eisenhower and Montgomery had a telephonic discussion of the implications of the crossing. The field marshal expressed his feeling that a crossing in the south would serve to attract German forces which might have opposed his northern attack. Though Remagen meant that American forces were the first to cross, the primary objective of Montgomery's main Allied attack, the Ruhr, still remained in German hands. It was decided that Eisenhower's plan would not be changed and that Montgomery's assault would be executed as scheduled. Meanwhile, 12 Army Group would continue offensive action north of the Moselle, and assist 6 Army Group in its Saar attack.⁷⁵

By 9 March, when Montgomery issued his "Orders for the Battle of the Rhine," the Remagen bridgehead was over three miles deep. Following luncheon with the field marshal that day, Simpson flew to Bradley's headquarters for a decoration ceremony at which he and several other American generals received French awards. Most of the generals stayed for the night, and during dinner Patton regaled all with story after story. General Alphonse Pierre Juin, Chief of Staff of the French Ministry of National Defense, was present. Though Patton tried to translate his stories for Juin's benefit, his French was not up to the task, and an interpreter was pressed into duty. Following dinner, a moving picture was shown, and then the generals retired for the night. Patton and Simpson, West Point classmates and old friends, enjoyed one of their infrequent reunions and continued to talk with Patton needling Simpson about being too fond of the British and Simpson replying that he was under orders and only doing his duty. On and on the give and take went, until finally at 0230 Simpson called it a night.⁷⁶

While the fighting went on as the Remagen bridgehead was enlarged and Patton turned his attention to clearing a portion of the Saar-Palatinate region south of the Moselle and to crossing the Rhine in his sector, Simpson continued to make ready for PLUNDER.⁷⁷

On the other side of the river preparations were being made to receive the expected Allied attack. General der Fallschirmtruppen (LTG) Alfred Schlemm, who had commanded the final German defense on the west bank, was ordered to defend with his First Parachute Army in the critical southern portion of the Army Group H sector. Schlemm's zone included all of Montgomery's intended assault sites. The LXXXVI Corps, commanded by

General der Infanterie (LTG) Erich Straube, held the area where Simpson planned to cross. South of Schlemm's army and opposite the American XIX Corps were elements of Army Group B.⁷⁸

As the assault date neared British intelligence estimated the strength which the German commanders could use to oppose the attack. Including soldiers of the Volkssturm, only 85,000 men defended along the 22-mile long assault zone. Post-war study has revealed that this number was probably high. In any case, Montgomery would have overwhelming numerical superiority, as Anderson's corps alone numbered 120,000 or 35,000 more than the estimate of German troops available to defend against Montgomery's attack. While Army Group H had a substantial artillery complement which was bolstered by mobile antiaircraft weapons brought in from the Netherlands, only about 200 tanks and assault guns would be available. As a reserve, the First Parachute Army had a replacement training division. Army Group H reserve was a panzer corps, consisting of a greatly understrength panzer division and a panzer grenadier division which was in the same condition.⁷⁹

Such was the situation which the new Commander in Chief West, Generalfeldmarschall (General of the Army) Albert Kesselring encountered when, at mid-March, he made a tour of his Rhine defenses. Kesselring quickly saw that his units were greatly understrength. Many troops had already been sent to the east to aid in the stabilization of the front along the Lower Oder and Neisse Rivers. Transfer of these units made Kesselring's job harder, as did the high-level decision to allocate most of the available replacements to the east.⁸⁰

As Kesselring did what he could to shore up the German defenses, Eisenhower was making major decisions which would affect Simpson's operations. On 13 March the Supreme Commander confirmed that PLUNDER would commence on the 24th. Allied air forces, Eisenhower decided, were to give the highest priority to the operation.⁸¹

Montgomery wanted to be able to call upon additional troops, if they were needed to exploit success. Eisenhower agreed. Though Montgomery's command had been augmented by troop transfers from Italy and the Middle East as well as by the control of Simpson's army, the field marshal might still need help. On 13 March the Supreme Commander directed that Bradley be prepared to employ First Army north of the Ruhr with at least ten divisions. Bradley objected, as such a move would have a major effect on 12th Army Group operations, especially in the Remagen bridgehead. He met with Eisenhower on 18 March. The same day Eisenhower wrote to Montgomery, Bradley, and Devers, outlining his new intentions. If First Army were needed north of the Ruhr, Eisenhower wrote, it would be employed as a part of an American army group which would consist of First and Ninth Armies. Should this occur, Devers was to command the Third and Seventh Armies, which would conduct a secondary attack in the south. Thus, Montgomery and the others were told the price for more troops north of the Ruhr would be transfer of Ninth Army from British operational control. Montgomery dropped his request and noted on his personal copy of the letter: "I have just received attached. I shall make no comment to Ike. The employment of two Army Groups north of the Ruhr is unsound tactically, and is impossible administratively."⁸² For

the time being, at least, Simpson's Ninth Army would remain a part of Montgomery's command.

While Eisenhower was deciding the strength and command structure for his main attack north of the Ruhr, Simpson, whose army would play a vital role in that attack, was continuing his assault preparations. Sand tables appeared in the bivouacs of assault units, aerial photographs--some 43,000 were taken--were distributed, and over 800,000 maps were issued by the army map depot. Civilians were evacuated in an area parallel to the Rhine and several miles deep. Patrols, which gathered data on the east bank, were carefully scheduled so that their presence did not give clues to where the assaults would occur.⁸³

All the preparations were being made to cross a strip of water which, in the Ninth Army assault area, was a little over 1,000 feet wide, with a current of some five miles per hour and a depth of nine feet or more. Dikes, built to control the river in flood, were ready-made defense positions, as were railroad embankments. Canals, drainage ditches and streams sliced through the terrain on both sides of the Rhine. The Lippe River and generally parallel Lippe-Seiten Canal ran east and west. The river and canal would not only be the initial boundary between the two attacking Allied armies, but also would become obstacles to any force which had to cross them. Towns, villages, and even individual buildings would, no doubt, be used as defensive strongpoints. The best roads in the Ninth Army assault sector were to be found on either flank, toward the Ruhr on the south and the Lippe River/Lippe-Seiten Canal on the north.⁸⁴

Montgomery came to Ninth Army on 21 March and briefed the assembled corps and division commanders on Operation PLUNDER. The operation would be phased with the first assault by the 51st (Highland) Division of the British XXX Corps at Rees, at 2100 hours, 23 March. An hour later the 1st Commando Brigade of the British XII Corps would land two miles downstream from Wesel. At 0200 hours, on 24 March, the 15th (Scottish) Division of the XII Corps at Xanten, and the US 30th Division at Mehrum, would begin their crossing. The final assault, that of the US 79th Division at Milchplatz, would commence at 0300 hours. The daylight parachute drop would start at 1000 hours. Montgomery estimated that the German air and ground units, weakened by three days of pre-assault pounding by Allied heavy bombers and tactical aircraft, as well as by the planned massive artillery preparation, would put up but token resistance in the Ninth Army sector. He expected a stiffer fight in the British zone, where the tougher parachute units were located.⁸⁵

The conference over, Montgomery and the other commanders adjourned for lunch in Simpson's mess. After they had eaten the field marshal departed, and Simpson reconvened the group for a last run-through of the Ninth Army plan. The commanders toasted success on the Rhine, then returned to their units. The attack was little more than 48 hours away.⁸⁶

Simpson believed that war correspondents should be kept up to date, and on 22 March he came to the press camp and gave his usual pre-attack briefing. He explained the Ninth Army operation and its relationship to the 21 Army Group plan. After he had fielded questions he told the correspondents when the attack was to start, gathered up his maps and left. While none of the information would be sent back until officially

released, Simpson's briefing gave the correspondents an idea of the entire operation, and enabled them to choose vantage points for the assault.⁸⁷

Simpson wanted to ensure that the press heard the entire story from his own mouth. His briefings were appreciated, for as Barney Oldfield, who ran the Ninth Army press camp, recalled, "The press loved him, and considered his frankness to them unparalleled"⁸⁸

By the morning of Friday the 23d, Simpson's final arrangements were almost complete. Both of his assault divisions had closed into forward assembly areas. After spending the morning conferring with his staff to ensure that all details were attended to, he drove to the Second British Army tactical headquarters to meet with Montgomery, Dempsey, and MG Matthew B. Ridgway, Commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps.⁸⁹

The meeting began at 1600 hours. Montgomery reached a speedy decision: the assault would go the next day.⁹⁰

FOOTNOTES

¹ More information about Simpson and his Ninth Army from arrival in England to the taking of the west bank of the Rhine can be found in several sources: Thomas R. Stone, "He Had the Guts to Say No: A Military Biography of General William H. Simpson" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University, 1974). The portion of this dissertation which deals with General Simpson's decision to postpone GRENADE has been published as: Thomas R. Stone, "1630 Comes Early on the Roer," Military Review, LIII (Oct 73), pp. 3-21. The official US Army history series, United States Army in World War II: The European Theater of Operations, contains much material concerning Ninth Army. Particularly important are: Martin Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit (Washington, DC, 1961) for operations on the Brittany Peninsula; Charles B. MacDonald, The Siegfried Line Campaign (Washington, DC, 1963) for the movement into the line south of First Army, the shift to the north and the November offensive; Hugh M. Cole, The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge (Washington, DC, 1965) for operations during the Bulge; and Charles B. MacDonald, The Last Offensive (Washington, DC, 1973) for the period from Jan 45 to the reaching of the Rhine. A valuable source is Conquer, the Story of the Ninth Army, 1944-1945 (no author) (Washington, DC, 1947). Conquer is a comprehensive work and is, according to MacDonald, "... one of the most objective of the unofficial histories." (MacDonald, Last Offensive, 136).

² Attributed to William H. Simpson by frontline troops as told to author by Bernard J. Leu, Sr., Personal Interview (hereinafter referred to as PI), 23 Mar 73. Leu, who was a sergeant in Company 1, 291st Regiment, 75th Infantry Division, during the Second World War, retired some 30 years later as a colonel.

³ Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade In Europe (Garden City, NY, 1948), 395; Conquer, 199; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 294.

⁴ Alexander McKee, The Race for the Rhine Bridges (New York, 1971), 338; Statement by Armistead D. Mead, PI, 24 Jun 71, Mead was G-3 of Ninth Army; Conquer, 199-200.

⁵ Francis Chase, Jr., "The Rhine was 100 Miles Wide," Saturday Evening Post, 217 (5 May 45), 106; Conquer, 200-201.

⁶ Talmage Main, Letter to Author (hereinafter referred to as LTA), 7 Jan 72. Main was a member of the Ninth Army Engineer Section. Conquer, 203, MacDonald, Last Offensive, 294.

⁷Conquer, 203; Memorandum For Record, O. N. Bradley, 19 Nov 44, Bradley Papers, United States Army Military History Institute (hereinafter referred to as MHI), Carlisle Barracks, PA. Bradley was the Commanding General of the 12th Army Group.

⁸Conquer, 202-203.

⁹N. a., Ninth Army Engineer Operations in Rhine River Crossing (n.p., 1945), 5; Conquer, 94-95, 206-207.

¹⁰MacDonald, Last Offensive, 295.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Great Britain, Public Record Office (hereinafter referred to as PRO), MSS, "Commander-in-Chief's Expose of the Situation - 14 January 1945," WO 205/9 Operations Veritable and Grenade, Minutes of CIC Meetings; Conquer, 208.

¹³Conquer, 207-208; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 295; General Simpson's Personal Calendar, Volume III (hereinafter referred to as PC - this calendar was prepared by General Simpson's aides - Simpson did not keep a diary), entry of 19 Jan 45, William H. Simpson Papers, San Antonio, Texas.

¹⁴Great Briatin, PRO MSS, "21 Army Group," 21 Jan 45 (Operational Directive), WO 205/5G CIC OPS Reports and Directives to Army Commanders; Conquer, 208-209; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 295, Forrest C. Pogue, United States Army in World War II: The European Theater of Operations The Supreme Command (Washington, DC, 1954), 430.

¹⁵John D. Horn, "War Diary" entries of 27 Jan, 1 Feb 45, John D. Horn Papers, Darien, Conn. MAJ Horn was General Simpson's senior aide. Also, R. W. Thompson, Montgomery: The Field Marshal (London, 1969), 284; Conquer, 210; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 296.

¹⁶Thompson, Montgomery, 284, Conquer, 210; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 296.

¹⁷MacDonald, Last Offensive, 296; Pogue, Supreme Command, 430; Conquer, 210; Thompson, Montgomery, 284; James W. Stock, Rhine Crossing, (New York, 1973), III; Statements by William H. Simpson, PI, 27 Jan 72 and 17 Mar 72.

¹⁸Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 22 Apr 71; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 296.

¹⁹For more discussion of the whys and wherefores of Montgomery's action see: Chester, Wilmot, The Struggle For Europe (New York, 1952), 676-677, and Thompson, Montgomery, 282-285. Thompson says the close liaison between Dempsey and Simpson was the main cause that the two armies worked so closely together. In fact, he notes, Ninth Army worked better with the British than any of the other American armies would have done (283).

20

Bernard Law Montgomery, El Alamein to the River Sangro - Normandy to the Baltic (New York, 1974), 376; John North, North-West Europe 1944-5: The Achievement of the 21st Army Group (London, 1953), 190.

21 "G-3 Daily Summary 9 Feb 45," file - 109.3.2, Ninth Army G-3 Journal and File, 1-15 Feb 45, Record Group (hereinafter referred to as RG) 338, National Archives, Suitland, Maryland (hereinafter referred to as NA); Ninth Army Engineer Operations, 5; Conquer, 213.

22 Conquer, 211.

23 Ibid.; Great Britain, PRO MSS, "21 Army Group Orders for The Battle of the Rhine," 9 Mar 45, WO 205/5G, Commander-in-Chief Operations Reports and Directives to Army Commanders.

24 Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 16 Feb 72.

25 "LOI Number Fourteen," 19 Feb 45, file - Letters of Instructions (hereinafter referred to as LOI), 1944-1945, RG 338, NA; n.a., History of the XVI Corps from Its Activation to the End of the War in Europe (Washington, 1947), 36, Conquer, 214.

26 "Message CG Ninth US Army to CG XVI Corps," 4 Mar 45, file - G-3 Operational Plans and Directives, RG 338, NA; Conquer, 214; Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 23 Jan 72; Statement by James E. Moore, PI, 30 May 72, Moore was Chief of Staff of Ninth Army; "Message CG Ninth US Army to G-1 OPS, Second British Army," 3 Mar 45 and "G-3 Daily Summary," 5 Mar 45, file - 109.3.2, Ninth Army G-3 Journal and File, 1-15 Mar 45, RG 338, NA.

27 "AAR, G-1 Section, 1-15 Mar," 19 Mar, file - 109-1, Ninth Army - After Action Report (hereinafter referred to as AAR) and Supporting Papers, G-1 Section, 1-15 Mar 45, RG 407, NA; Conquer, 215-217; Edwin M. Van Bibber, "Objective Perfection," Infantry Journal, LVIII (1946), 36. Van Bibber discusses the planning for and execution of the Rhine crossing by the 313th Regt of the 79th Div. (36-41). Statements by William H. Simpson, PI, 16 Feb 72 and 27 Apr 72; Alvan C. Gillem, Jr., Lecture: "Action of a Corps," Ft. Benning, 3 Mar 48, World War II, 44-48, Alvan C. Gillem, Jr. Papers, MHI. Gillem was the Commander of the XIII Corps. "Inter-Office Memo, Subj: Deception in Connection with Operation PLUNDER," 7 Mar 45, from Ninth Army Engineer to G-3 and back to Engineer, file - 370, G-3 Operational Plans and Directives, RG 338, NA.

28 Conquer, 219. Details concerning the deception operation can be found in Conquer, 216-222.

29 Roy V. Rickard, "Memorandum for the Commanding General, 14 Apr 45, Subject: Logistical Aspects of the RHINE River Crossing and Subsequent Breakthrough to the Elbe River," Simpson Papers. Rickard was G-4 of Ninth Army. "AAR 160001-282400 Feb," dtd 4 Mar 45 and "AAR 010001-152400 Mar," dtd 15 Mar 45, both file - 109-4, Ninth Army AAR and Supporting Papers, G-4 Section, 16-28 Feb and 1-15 Mar 45, RG 407, NA; Conquer, 192-193, 220-225.

³⁰ Seton H. Grim, "A Combat Battalion on the Rhine," The Military Engineer, XXXVII (1945), 497; Conquer, 220-225. This section of Conquer (220-225) contains a detailed account of the logistical problem and its solution.

³¹ Omar N. Bradley, Soldier's Story (New York, 1951), 422.

³² Statements by James E. Moore, PI, 17 Jun 71 and 29 Jun 71; Statement by Armistead D. Mead, PI, 9 Jun 72. Mead was the G-3 of Ninth Army. Statement by Theodore W. Parker, PI, 18 Jun 71. Parker was G-3 Operations Officer of Ninth Army. Statement by Charles D. Y. Ostrom, Jr., PI, 7 Jun 72. Ostrom was Ninth Army Ammunition Officer.

³³ Statement by Robert C. Macon, Telephone Interview, 22 Feb 72. Macon was the Commanding General of the 83d Infantry Division. Statement by John H. Collier, PI, 27 Apr 72. Collier was the Commanding General, CCA, 2d Armored Division. John H. Harden, LTA, undated - approximately 14 Feb 72. Harden was one of Simpson's aides. Statement by Bernard J. Leu, Sr., PI, 23 Mar 73.

³⁴ Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 23 Jan 72; Statement by Rowland F. Kirks, PI, 28 Jun 71. Kirks, Chief of Combat Intelligence, G-2, briefed Simpson almost every day. Daniel H. Hundley, LTA, 14 Feb 72. Hundley was G-1 of Ninth Army.

³⁵ Statement by Armistead D. Mead, PI, 9 Jun 72.

³⁶ Loftus E. Becker, "Use of Ultra by Ninth U.S. Army," 27 May 45, pp. 2-3 in Reports by U.S. Army Ultra Representatives with Army Field Commands in the European Theater of Operations (n.p., n.d.), (copy in MHI); Ronald Lewin, Ultra Goes to War: The First Account & World War II's Greatest Secret Based on Official Sources (New York, 1978), 245-246.

³⁷ Statements by James E. Moore, PI, 29 Jun 71 and 30 May 72; John H. Harden, LTA, undated - approximately 14 Feb 72.

³⁸ John H. Harden, LTA, undated - approximately 14 Feb 72; Statement by Maurice J. D'Andrea, PI, 2 Jul 71. D'Andrea was the Ninth Army Commander's personal physician.

³⁹ Statements by James E. Moore, PI, 29 Jun 71 and 30 May 72; Statement by Armistead D. Mead, PI, 9 Jun 72; John H. Harden, LTA, undated - approximately 14 Feb 72; George A. Millener, LTA, 4 Feb 72. Millener was Deputy Chief of Staff, Ninth Army.

⁴⁰ Statement by Charles P. Bixel, PI, 28 Jun 71. Bixel was G-2 of Ninth Army from 22 May 44 to 22 Feb 45. Daniel H. Hundley, LTA, 14 Feb 72; Statement by Harry D. McHugh, PI, 16 Feb 72. McHugh held several positions in Ninth Army units to include commander of an infantry regiment. William E. Shambora, LTA, 17 Feb 72. Shambora was Ninth Army Surgeon.

⁴¹ Statement by James E. Moore, PI, 29 Jun 71; Daniel H. Hundley, LTA, 14 Feb 72.

⁴² Statements by Armistead D. Mead, PI, 24 Jun 71 and 9 Jun 72.

⁴³ Statement by James E. Moore, PI, 29 Jun 71; Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 27 Jan 72, also LTA, 12 Aug 70; Statement by Theodore W. Parker, PI, 18 Jun 71, also LTA 8 Apr 73.

⁴⁴ Statement by Jacob L. Devers, PI, 13 Jun 71. Devers, who commanded the 6th Army Group in Europe during the Second World War, was a West Point classmate and long-time friend and associate of General Simpson. Statements by James E. Moore, PI, 17 Jun 71 and 30 May 72; George A. Millener, LTA, 4 Feb 72.

⁴⁵ Statement by James E. Moore, PI, 17 Jun 71; Statement by Charles P. Bixel, PI, 28 Jun 71; "Resume of Telephone Conversation between General Simpson and General Sibert, Time: 271040 Feb 45," PC IV; Statement by William A. Harris, Telephone interview, 23 Jun 71. Harris was a member of the 12th Army Group G-3 Section. Isaac D. White, LTA, 23 Feb 72. White, Commanding General, 2d Armored Division, recalled that he had heard many war correspondents remark that Ninth Army headquarters was the most professional of all army headquarters.

⁴⁶ Quotation is from statement by Armistead D. Mead, 24 Jun 71. Sources for the comments on Simpson's relations with his staff (four paragraphs) are: Statment by Mead, 9 Jun 72; Statements by James E. Moore, 17 Jun 71 and 30 May 72; Statement by Rowland F. Kirks, PI, 28 Jun 71; Statement by Perry L. Baldwin, PI, 26 Jun 71. Baldwin was the Inspector General, Ninth Army. Also, statement by John D. Horn, PI, 20 Jun 71; Daniel H. Hundley, LTA, 14 Feb 72; John Toland, The Last 100 Days (New York, 1966), 98; Statement by John G. Murphy, PI, 23 Jun 71. Murphy was the Ninth Army Antiaircraft Officer.

⁴⁷ Statement by Bernard J. Leu, Sr., PI, 23 Mar 73.

⁴⁸ Statements by William H. Simpson, 27 Jan 72, 16 Feb 72, and 23 Aug 77; Statements by James E. Moore, 17 Jun 71 and 30 May 72; Statement by Harold D. Kehm, 25 Jun 71. Kehm became G-2 Ninth Army on 3 Mar 45.

⁴⁹ Quotation is by Isaac D. White, LTA, 23 Feb 72. Sources for these paragraphs on Simpson's relations with his subordinate commanders are: Statements by William H. Simpson, PI, 16 Feb 72 and 17 Mar 72; Statements by James E. Moore, 17 Jun 71 and 29 Jun 71; Alvan C. Gillem, Jr., to BG Louis Truman, Chief of Staff, Third Army, Ft. McPherson, GA, 26 Feb 54, Simpson Papers; Daniel H. Hundley, LTA, 14 Feb 72; Richard W. Stephens, LTA, 25 Mar 72. Stephens was the Chief of Staff of the 30th Infantry Division.

⁵⁰ Armistead D. Mead, PI, 24 Jun 71. Also Alvan C. Gillem, Jr., letter to Louis Truman, 26 Feb 54, Simpson Papers; Alvan C. Gillem, Jr., LTA, 8 Jun 71. Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 17 Mar 72; Statement by John B. Anderson, PI, 23 Jun 71. Anderson commanded the XVI Corps; Statements by James E. Moore, PI, 29 Jun 71 and 30 May 72.

⁵¹ Alvan C. Gillem, Jr., LTA, 8 Jun 71. John B. Anderson remembered his experience as XVI Corps Commander as: " . . . the most pleasant service during my career." (John B. Anderson, LTA, 30 May 71.) Raymond S. McLain, Commander of the XIX Corps died before the research for this project was begun. In a 23 Jun 50 letter to General Simpson, McLain wrote: "I consider it a great honor to have been a part of the great Ninth Army, and I will always remember the kindness with which I was received by you and your staff and will always be sensible of the confidence and faith you reposed in me as Corps Commander of your great army." (Raymond S. McLain to William H. Simpson, 23 Jun 50, Simpson Papers.)

⁵² Statements by William H. Simpson, PI, 22 Apr 71 and 26 Jun 72.

⁵³ Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 26 Jan 72; "War Correspondent Frank Conniff's Interview with General Simpson for Press Release," filed with 27 Feb entry, PC IV.

⁵⁴ Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 5 Jan 71.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Statement by Maurice J. D'Andrea, PI, 8 Aug 71; John H. Harden, LTA, undated - approximately 14 Feb 72; Statement by Armistead D. Mead, PI, 9 Jun 72; Statement by Theodore W. Parker, PI, 18 Jun 71.

⁵⁷ Sources for the description of Simpson and his visits to the field include: Isaac D. White, LTA, 23 Feb 72; George A. Millener, LTA, 4 Feb 72; Statement by John H. Collier, PI, 27 Apr 72; MacDonald, Siegfried Line, 379, "War Correspondent Frank Conniff's Interview with General Simpson for Press Release," filed with 27 Feb entry, PC IV; Statement by Robert C. Macon, Telephone Interview, 22 Feb 72; John H. Harden, LTA, undated - approximately 14 Feb 72.

⁵⁸ Robert H. York in LTA, 20 May 72, described how he, as a regimental commander in a division which had also been assigned to another army, felt about his time in Ninth Army. York remarked that though he never met Simpson, he could see Simpson's personality coming through.

⁵⁹ Omar N. Bradley, LTA, 8 May 71.

⁶⁰ "Memorandum For: General Eisenhower, SUBJECT: List of Officers Contributing to War Effort," Chester B. Hanson Papers, MHI. Bradley's memorandum read: "The following list is submitted in accordance with your recent letter in which you asked me to submit to you a list in order of priority of those officers whom I considered had contributed the maximum to the war effort. I have placed certain officers who have had great opportunity to contribute to the war effort below others who have had less opportunity, because, reading over your letter carefully, I felt that that was what you wanted; in other words, a Corps commander who had less opportunity than an Army commander and still contributed much more when his opportunity is considered." The names on Bradley's list were:

1. Smith, W. B.; 2. Spaatz, Carl A.; 3. Hodges, C. H.; 4. Quesada, Elwood R.; 5. Truscott, L. K., Jr.; 6. Patton, George S., Jr.; 7. Collins, J. Lawton; 8. Gerow, L. T.; 9. Clark, Mark W.; 10. Bull, Harold R.; 11. Gruenther, A. M.; 12. Kean, W. B.; 13. Allen, L. C.; 14. Middleton, Troy H.; 15. Patch, Alexander McC.; 16. Simpson, W. H.; 17. Doolittle, James H.; 18. Eddy, M. S.; 19. Hailsip, Wade H.; 20. Corlett, Charles H.; 21. Devers, Jacob L.; 22. Eaker, Ira C.; 23. Walker, W. H.; 24. Brooks, Edward H.; 25. McLain, R. S.; 26. Vandenberg, Hoyt S.; 27. Littlejohn, R. McG.; 28. Lee, John C. H.; 29. Huebner, C. R.; 30. Harmon, Ernest N.; 31. Ridgway, Matthew B.; 32. Van Fleet, J. A.

⁶¹Eisenhower to George Catlett Marshall, 31 Aug 44 and 1 Oct 44, Alfred D. Chandler, ed. The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower (Baltimore, 1970) (hereinafter referred to as EP), IV, Nos. 1925 and 2016; Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 26 Jan 72; Horn, "War Diary," entry of 28 Jan 45.

⁶²Eisenhower to George Catlett Marshall, 14 Jan 45, EP, IV, No. 2238. Marshall's message of 12 Jan 45 is mentioned in footnote 1.

⁶³Memo, 1 Feb 45, EP, IV, No. 2271 and fn 1. Eisenhower's meeting with Marshall is mentioned in - Eisenhower to George Catlett Marshall, 9 Feb 45, EP, IV, No. 2276. In this message Eisenhower explained that he had prepared a list of "outstanding" general officers, and that the list was composed after he had reviewed similar lists which had been submitted by Bradley and Smith. The Supreme Commander offered to send a copy to Marshall. The names on Eisenhower's list were: 1. & 2. Bradley and Spaatz (equal); 3. Smith; 4. Patton; 5. Clark; 6. Truscott; 7. Doolittle; 8. Gerow; 9. Collins; 10. Patch; 11. Hodges; 12. Simpson; 13. Eaker; 14. Bull; 15. Cannon; 16. & 17. Ridgway and Brooks (equal); 18. Walker; 19. Lee; 20. Gruenther; 21. Vandenburg; 22. Haislip; 23. Quesada; 24. Devers (Eisenhower had not definitely made up his mind concerning where to place Devers); 25. Eddy; 26. Rooks; 27. Crawford; 28. Larkin; 29. Weyland; 30. Norstad; 31. Allen, L.; 32. McLain; 33. Littlejohn; 34. Anderson, Fred; 35., 36., and 37. Huebner, Harmon, E., and Van Fleet, J. A. (equal); 38. Nugent.

⁶⁴Horn, "War Diary," entry of 28 Jan 45; "Orders, SEC/WAR DIRECTS," 7 Feb 45, Simpson 201 File, Simpson Papers; Eisenhower to George Catlett Marshall, 2 Mar 45, EP, IV, No. 2307. The six officers Eisenhower planned to recommend for promotion were: Bradley, Spaatz, Devers, Patton, Hodges, and Simpson.

⁶⁵B. L. Montgomery to William H. Simpson, 10 Mar 45, Simpson Papers. Eisenhower's forwarding letter to The Adjutant General for inclusion in Simpson's official record contained the following paragraph: "The commendation from Field Marshal Montgomery has been fully earned. In the entire operations of the Ninth Army, Lt. General Simpson has performed in a superior manner. This includes the operations for crossing the Rhine, just initiated yesterday." (Memorandum to: The Adjutant General, United

States Army," 25 Mar 45; Eisenhower Papers 1916-52, folder - Ulio, James A., Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas.)

⁶⁶Horn, "War Diary," entires of 10 and 11 Mar 45; Conquer, 193.

⁶⁷Horn, "War Diary," entry of 11 Mar 45.

⁶⁸Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 26 Jan 72; Statement by Armistead D. Mead, PI, 9 Jun 72; Statement by Harry D. McHugh, PI, 16 Feb 72.

⁶⁹"Letter, Office of the Commanding General (to establish Ninth Army rest center system)," 1 Mar 45, inclosure 1 to AAR, G-1 Section, 16-28 Feb 45, dated 4 Mar 45, file - 190-1, Ninth Army AAR and Supporting Papers, G-1 Section, 16-28 Feb 45, RG 407, NA; "Daily Summaries, G-1 Miscellaneous Branch," 27 Feb 45, file - 190-1, Ninth Army AAR and Supporting Papers, G-1 Section, 16-28 Feb 45, RG 407, NA; Conquer, 194.

⁷⁰Bernard S. Leu, Sr. to William H. Simpson, 27 Mar 73 and D. Stephen Coney to William H. Simpson, 28 Sep 73, both in Simpson Papers. Coney was a sergeant in the 597th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion.

⁷¹Sources for material concerning the meeting at 21 Army Group Headquarters and the contents of Montgomery's plans include: Horn, "War Diary," entry of 9 Mar 45; Great Britain, PRO MSS, 21 Army Group, "Orders for the Battle of the Rhine," 9 Mar 45, WO 205/5G Commander-in-Chief Operations Reports and Directives to Army Commanders; Conquer, 225-226; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 300.

⁷²"LOI Number Seventeen," 13 Mar 45 and "Amendment Number One to LOI Number Seventeen," 19 Mar 45, file - Letters of Instructions 1944-1945, RG 338, NA; Conquer, 226-231.

⁷³Conquer, 225, 231-234.

⁷⁴Eisenhower, Crusade, 378-379.

⁷⁵Arthur Bryant, Triumph in the West: A History of the War Years Based on the Diaries of Field-Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff (New York, 1959), 427; Bernard Law Montgomery, The Memoirs of Field-Marshal The Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, K. G. (Cleveland, 1958), 289; Eisenhower to Omar Nelson Bradley and Jacob Loucks Devers, 8 Mar 45, EP, IV, No. 2321; Conquer, 225; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 294.

⁷⁶Statement by William H. Simpson, PI, 22 Apr 71; Horn, "War Diary," entry of 9 Mar 45; Eisenhower, Crusade, 380; Pogue, Supreme Command, 11.

⁷⁷MacDonald, Last Offensive, 236-237, 296-297.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 301, 304; F. W. Mellenthin, Panzer Battles: A Study of the Employment of Armor in the Second World War (Norman, 1955), 347.

⁷⁹ MacDonald, Last Offensive, 301-302.

⁸⁰ Albert Kesselring, Kesselring: A Soldier's Record (New York, 1954), 283-286; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 222, 302; B. H. Liddell Hart, History of the Second World War (New York, 1970), 668-669.

⁸¹ Fn. 2, EP, IV, No. 2334.

⁸² Montgomery's annotated letter is in: Great Britain, PRO MSS Dwight D. Eisenhower to Bernard L. Montgomery, 18 Mar 45, WO 205/5D Demi-Official Correspondence of Commander-in-Chief. Eisenhower, Crusade, 387; Bradley, Soldier's Story, 517-518; Omar N. Bradley, "War Diary, October 6, 1943-June 16, 1945," entry of 18 Mar 45, Bradley Papers, MHI; Eisenhower to Omar Nelson Bradley, 13 Mar 45, EP, IV, No. 2334. No. 2347 is a copy of the letter which was sent to the three Army Group commanders. Most of Montgomery's reinforcing units were used in northwest Holland, with only the British 5th Division which arrived in April, going to the Second British Army. (North, North-West Europe, 205.)

⁸³ Van Bibber, "Objective Perfection," 39-40; Statement by Bernard J. Leu, Sr., PI, 23 Mar 73; Conquer, 236, 239-241, 245.

⁸⁴ MacDonald, Last Offensive, 297-298; MacDonald, The Mighty Endeavor: American Armed Forces in the European Theater in World War II (New York, 1969), 445.

⁸⁵ PC V, entry of 21 Mar 45; Conquer, 237, 242; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 200-301; Montgomery, El Alamein-Normandy, 381. The three-day pre-assault air attack is described in Wesley F. Craven and James Lea Cate, The Army Air Forces in World War II Volume Three, Europe: Argument to V-E Day January 1944 to May 1945 (Chicago, 1951), 772, 773.

⁸⁶ PC V, entry of 21 Mar 45.

⁸⁷ Barney Oldfield, Never a Shot in Anger (New York, 1956), 211-213; Horn, "War Diary," entry of 22 Mar 45.

⁸⁸ Barney Oldfield, "Country Boy Berserk!," 31, Oldfield Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.

⁸⁹ PC V, entry of 23 Mar 45 and MEMORANDUM to the Commanding General from G-3 Operations, 22 and 23 Mar 45, filed with 22 and 23 Mar 45 entries in PC V.

⁹⁰ PCV, entry of 23 Mar 45; MacDonald, Last Offensive, 302-303.

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